

# Cope: Abraham Lincoln Sailor declared Controller of Year

(Continued from pg. 1)

the LaMirada, Cali. native said. "Land-based ACs don't have the added complication of their airport moving around."

When Cope first joined the Navy, he wasn't really sure what he wanted to do.

"I told the recruiter that I wanted to be a GM, ABH or an AC," the 11-year

Navy veteran said. "I don't regret my choice to this day. Being a controller is a challenging and fun at the same time. I couldn't really image being anything else."

Cope is set on making a career out of the Navy.

"My immediate goal is to make chief," Cope said. "After the Navy, I plan on pursuing work as a controller for the

FAA."

When asked what his most memorable experience was on board, he had a different answer.

"Easy. Sept. 4, 2000," Cope said. "My son was born on that day and I haven't even seen him yet."

## Home: Abraham Lincoln winds up deployment

(Continued from pg. 1)

tion carrier battle group in the Arabian Gulf resulted in the bypassing of Thailand. Nonetheless, the ready and willing warriors remained undaunted, ready to carry out the mission in the Arabian Gulf.

"USS Abraham Lincoln's recent participation in the Rim of the Pacific exercise, as well as the operational successes the ship and air wing achieved during the work-up cycle, prepared us well for deployment," said Capt. Doug Dupouy, commanding officer. "When the call came to proceed at best speed to the Arabian Gulf, our Sailors were ready to go."

Relieving the USS George Washington Battle Group ahead of schedule, USS Abraham Lincoln assumed duties as the 'tip of the spear' carrier, ready to fight and maintain vigilance over the air space in the no-fly zone over Iraq.

According to Capt. Richard Thayer, commander of Carrier Air Wing FOURTEEN (CVW-14), the men and women serving aboard Abraham Lincoln are nothing less than first class. "Honor, courage, commitment. All three of these pillars were evident in the performance of our Sailors."

"Their attitude and morale and how well they responded to the conditions that they were placed under was incredible. Many times we 'went to the well' and asked them to draw out a little bit more. They're just outstanding. They did so with such great honor and dignity. I mean that from the heart, that's how much I admire them," said Thayer.

Only two port visits were made while the carrier was in the Arabian Gulf.

The primary factor for the reduced number of port visits was the terrorist attack on USS Cole and the subsequent increase in threat condition in the region.

Meanwhile, Sailors concentrated on providing the services necessary to fly nearly 1,500 sorties over Iraq.

USS Abraham Lincoln Command Master Chief Lump Nissen stated, "Abe's naval warriors performed with more enthusiasm and teamwork than I could have ever imagined. Their upbeat, hard charging, and professional attitudes were displayed daily, never failing to put a smile on my face."

"These Sailors produced. They produced when the ship's transit schedule changed and ports were cancelled; they produced when the ship was called to enter the Arabian Gulf early; they produced when word of the terrorist attack on USS Cole was received; they produced when liberty was nowhere in sight; and they produced as diplomats when they were finally rewarded with well deserved liberty in Australia on the transit home. This crew, these Sailors, deserve my gratitude and respect. I am proud to serve them as their command master chief."

One such Sailor who made the difference early on in the deployment was Petty Officer Third Class David Duvall, boatswain's mate. While standing watch on the fantail one night in early September, an airman fell off the flight deck and into the dark water.

Noticing two blinks of a strobe light, Duvall called for man overboard and the Sailor was rescued. "I pretty much saved his life. That's something I can take back to my family as something good that came out of the deployment. I felt good about myself. If I hadn't really been paying attention, he probably would have been gone."

Following almost 100 days in the Arabian Gulf, the carrier headed for some much-needed liberty in Perth, Australia, and Hobart, Tasmania. After taking in the sights 'down under' the carrier began its transit across the Pacific.

Capt. Dupouy praised the efforts of the ABE/CVW-14 team. "I could not have asked to sail with a finer group of men and women. They faced tough challenges. They attacked these challenges with a positive attitude, and they performed their mission superbly every step of the way. Now they are ready for some well-deserved rest and relaxation with family and friends."

After several consecutive days of ammunition offload, aircraft launched from the deck prior to the carrier's arrival in San Diego to return to their respective home bases. USS Abraham Lincoln took on friends and family as part of "Tiger Cruise 2001" and arrived in Everett following a two and a half day transit.